

From: nsparks [REDACTED]  
To: archonshb [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: Clubs  
Date: Mon, Nov 18, 2013 8:41 am

Hey Saul,

Good. I'm glad you're in agreement. I'm sure I will be asked that question at the forum, and my answer will be: "There will be no club in the future either."

About the non-discrimination policy you keep bringing up: please remember that sexual orientation was NOT in there originally, and that the *only* reason it was added was that YOU insisted it be specifically be added, or you said that the school might get in serious legal trouble. Frankly, no one but you wanted it in there, preferring to simply phrase it as "we don't discriminate against .... *and other legally protected categories*." Please stop implying it was something the BOT wanted to do; it's the law. And, I will be checking on how that relates to faith-based schools. If possible, we might be able to change it back to what it was before.

As far as the non-discrimination policy goes, do you realize that I have never, until the last two months, heard this phrase from the headmaster ever when talking about the school? The reason I never heard it was because the school does NOT, nor has it EVER, discriminated. Not allowing them admittance is discrimination. Not allowing them to have a club is NOT discrimination. And -- by the way -- tossing out that phrase "Non-discrimination" to make your point is ineffective; it's forcing the remedy you want down their throats, even if there are other possible remedies.. And again, had you "won their hearts first," you would never need to use it. It's a phrase, in fact, I'd eliminate from your vocabulary at the present time.

Also, remember, we've had gay students before, many of them. Tom handled it quietly and wonderfully, and the students considered themselves fortunate. I expect you to do the same.

Also, after hearing your story, I realize that it's imperative that I quickly offer a BOT resolution, prohibiting "protests" of any kind on campus. Thanks for letting me know about that, and stopping it in the first place.

Finally, we've spent way, way too much time in the first few months talking about "tolerance, diversity, non-discrimination, and LGBT" in these first twelve weeks. There was no simmering, hidden problem with any of these issues, at least as far as the school, or school personnel, or school policy was concerned: Nor was there a simmering problem within the student body.

What you should be talking about -- and what we hope to hear over the rest of the year -- is information about: "Faculty mentoring and curricular improvement, effectively working global lesson plans into the trips we take, college placement improvement, faculty evaluation, and issues concerning the raising of money." In other words, we want you to be the guy you said you'd be when we offered you the job.

Hope your well. Am I still meeting your friend on Tuesday before the BOT forum?

N

-----Original Message-----

From: Saul Hillel Benjamin [REDACTED]  
To: nsparks [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sun, Nov 17, 2013 9:57 pm  
Subject: Re: Clubs

Dear Nicholas:

Agreed, it is not appropriate and certainly not timely for any formally sanctioned club or

association. Agreed, too, that harassment of any kind ought not be tolerated.

To give you the background about how the text of my Letter to Epiphany Parents was written: The absence of reference to any future disposition reflects the guidance I was given by two Trustees and three of my administrative leadership team. They felt, and I concurred, that "the fewer details the better". They also advised, and I concurred, that no mention should be made of the Board's detailed July 2013 non-discrimination policy. Hence, the letter as published only noted what had happened to the point of that letter's publication; viz., that a conversation had begun among a small number of Upper School students about sexuality and identity, nothing more.

FYI: On Friday morning last week, before Mary Carroll's wonderful prayer and Chapel Talk, I finally was introduced (by Jeremy) to two of the students in that informal conversation group. I convinced them not to "demonstrate" or "make any public show" of their frustrations. Specifically, I told them that Chapel was *altogether the wrong place* to assert their opinions at all. They said that they had in fact been talking about doing something of that sort. But they agreed not to express or otherwise manifest "grievance". I told them that the School needed healing, not "heroics".

For my part, I believe that clubs or associations should be in the hands of the various Divisional Principals; not the Headmaster. Our *Mission & Guiding Principles* should be the criteria against which any club or association is best judged. I believe that's the best way to manage matters. What do you think?

Saul

-----Original Message-----

From: Nicholas Sparks [REDACTED]  
To: Saul Hillel Benjamin [REDACTED]  
Sent: Sun, Nov 17, 2013 6:31 pm  
Subject: Clubs

Saul,

In thinking long and hard, with an open heart, about this topic, and after discussions with Trustees and others, I have to conclude that the BOT will not sanction a club or association for GLBT students, no matter what it is called. At the same time, it should be made clear that they are welcome as students at the school, and that harassment won't be tolerated. How you (or other faculty) handle private conversations with students regarding this issue should, as always, remain confidential.

I point this out only because your letter to the parents regarding the issue did not specifically note that there will be no club or association in the future. It only noted what has happened to this point.

Nicholas

Sent from my iPhone